

HomeWord For Parents

The early church grew despite the fact that the disciples were arrested and forbidden to preach in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:17–18). The arrests and condemnation only served to make the apostles bolder as they prayed for help and courage from the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:29–31).

Their preaching angered the religious leaders. Tensions rose until Stephen, the first martyr for Jesus, was dragged from the city and stoned to death for proclaiming the gospel (Acts 7:54–59). Because of this new wave of violent persecution, Christians scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1–3). As they fled their persecutors, their faith went with them, and the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ was preached in other areas.

The apostle Philip could be considered the first missionary of the early church. He traveled to the city of Samaria, doing miracles and preaching Christ to

them. The people responded with joy to the truth of the gospel (Acts 8:4–8).

God then sent Philip south, along the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, where he was able to preach to an Ethiopian. This man of Ethiopia listened to Philip as he discussed the book of Isaiah and explained that it was Jesus whom Isaiah had written about. The Ethiopian believed Jesus was the Son of God and was baptized (Acts 8:26–37). And as he was a man of great authority in Ethiopia, who worked for Queen Candace, it is likely his testimony and changed life furthered the gospel in that region (Acts 8:27).

Persecution is real. God ordains it and uses it to grow His church and fulfill the Great Commission. It started in the first century, when the Christians were scattered, and they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:1). And it continues today.

Go to the Online Resource Page for more information.

outWord For Family Discussion

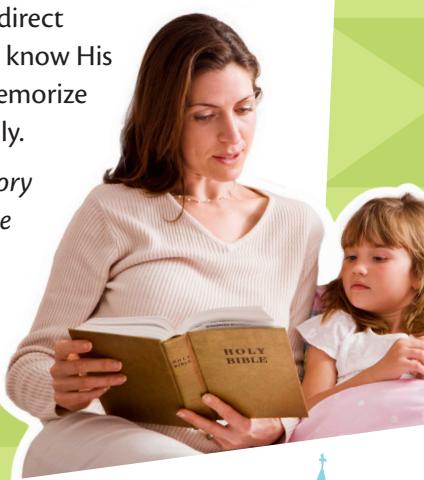
Suppose you were talking to a friend and she said she didn't believe that God would ever want her to suffer or go through hard times because He loves her and wants only good things for her. **What could you say?**

God does love all those who believe and trust in Jesus. He calls believers His children! But God's Word does not say that believers will never go through hard times. He doesn't promise we will always have everything we want. In fact, God tells us to be careful of treasures on earth. God wants us to depend on Him. If our lives are easy all the time, we will be more likely to depend on ourselves. Suffering and difficulties are often gifts from God because they help Christians turn to God and His Word for help and comfort. You see, God does want what is best for us, but what is best is not part of the world. What is best for us is Jesus Christ, salvation, forgiveness of sins, and the hope of eternity in heaven one day. And if God has to bring suffering into our lives to help us remember that, then He will—because He loves us so much!

inWord For Family Study

"Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). You want your children to walk in God's way, on His path. Only His Word can direct them. Help them to know His Word. Study and memorize it together as a family.

Begin with the memory verse in the Learn the Word section inside this handout.



The Gospel Spreads



KEY THEME

- God is sovereign over all things.



KEY PASSAGES

- Acts 8:4–8, 8:26–31, 8:34–35
- Romans 8:28

What You HEARD in the Word



- The Christians were persecuted and scattered. They went everywhere preaching the gospel.
- God sent Philip to Samaria where many believed. Then Philip was sent to explain the Scriptures to the Ethiopian man who believed and was baptized.

Ask your child these questions from today's lesson.

- 1 God used something that looked bad for good—to spread the gospel to other nations. What was it?
- 2 Who did God send to Samaria and then to the Ethiopian to speak of Jesus?
- 3 What did the Ethiopian man do after Philip preached Jesus to him?



Read the Word with Mom & Dad

Monday (Acts 8:1)

When the great persecution arose against the church, where did the people scatter?

Tuesday (Acts 8:3)

What was the man named Saul doing to the Christians?

Wednesday (Acts 8:4)

What did the Christians do when they were scattered everywhere?

Thursday (Acts 11:21)

What good thing was happening because of the persecution?

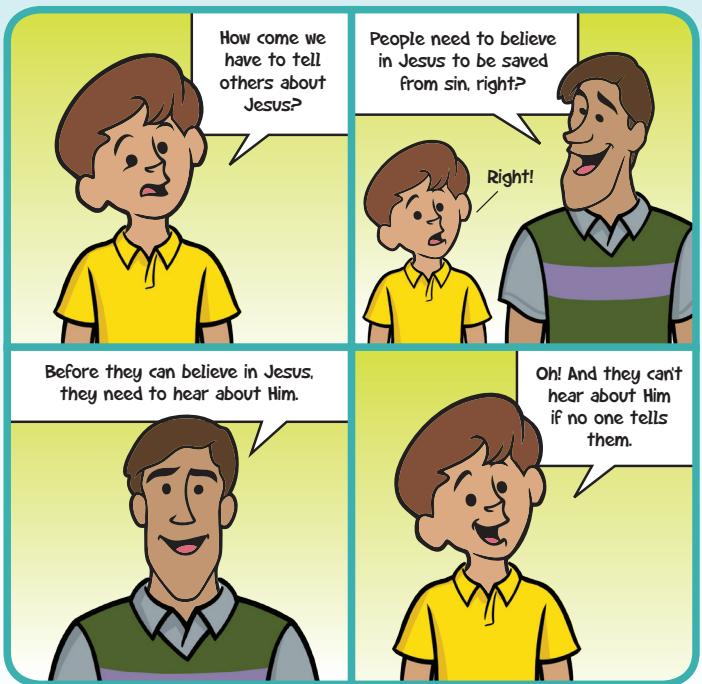
Friday (Acts 8:37)

What did the Ethiopian believe about Jesus?

Saturday (Romans 1:16)

The gospel brings sinners to salvation. Whose power is in the gospel? (Your Memory Verse)

LIVE the Word with Johnny and His Dad



Yes or No?

Step One: Read each word below. If a word came from our lesson today, circle the letter in the "Yes" column. If the word was not in our lesson then circle the letter in the "No" column.

Yes No

- | | | |
|---------------|---|---|
| 1. Philip | G | M |
| 2. Judas | K | O |
| 3. Christians | S | A |
| 4. Ethiopian | P | R |
| 5. Matthew | Z | E |
| 6. Isaiah | L | T |

ANSWER: gospel.

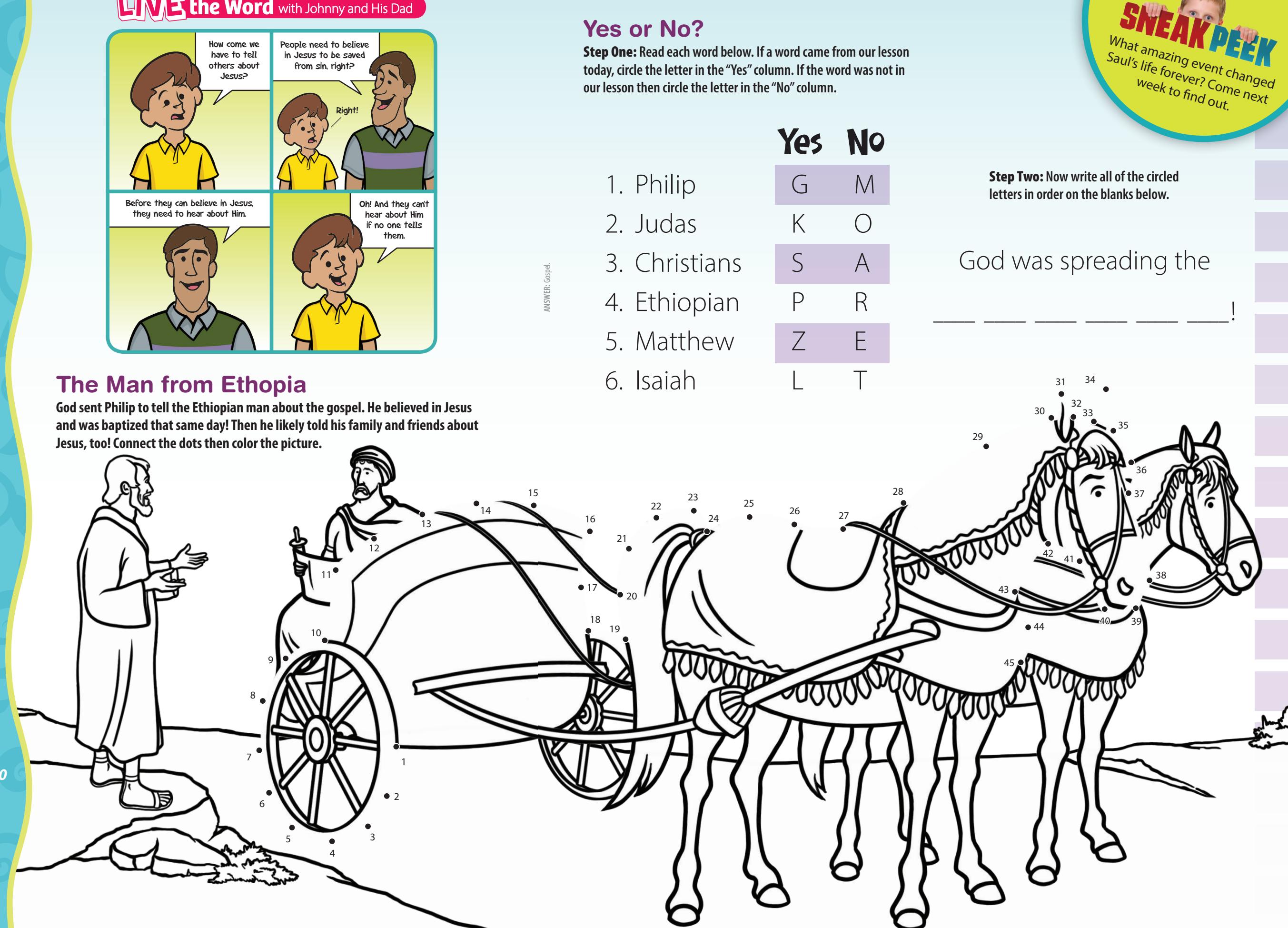
Step Two: Now write all of the circled letters in order on the blanks below.

God was spreading the _____!

Learn the Word!

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Romans 1:16



SNEAK PEEK
What amazing event changed Saul's life forever? Come next week to find out.